



# *The Berenstain Bears'* CHRISTMAS TREE

Stan & Jan Berenstain















The  
Berenstain Bears'  
**CHRISTMAS TREE**







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**Stan and Jan Berenstain**

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In Bear Country,  
Christmas excitement was mounting.  
The waiting was down  
To ten hours and counting.

The holly was hung.  
The presents were bought.  
A magnificent Christmas  
Salmon was caught.



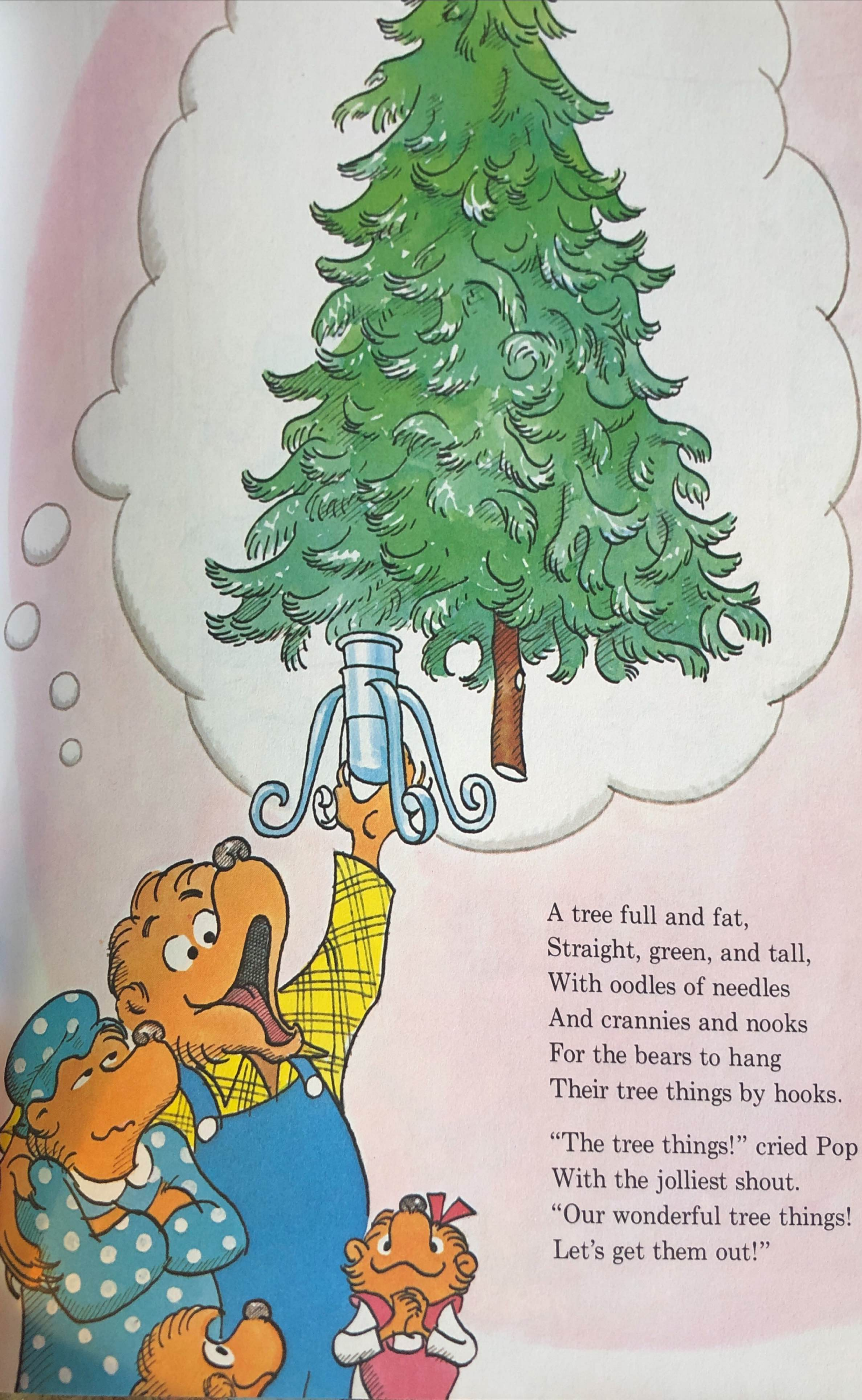




And now it was time  
For the most fun of all—  
Getting the tree!







A tree full and fat,  
Straight, green, and tall,  
With oodles of needles  
And crannies and nooks  
For the bears to hang  
Their tree things by hooks.

“The tree things!” cried Pop  
With the jolliest shout.

“Our wonderful tree things!  
Let’s get them out!”





They had quite a collection.  
There were bangles and bells  
And bright colored balls—





*Boxes of things  
In closets and cupboards  
And corners of halls!*





There were some that were bearlooms  
Saved year after year . . .

A Santa Bear sled  
With tiny reindeer . . .

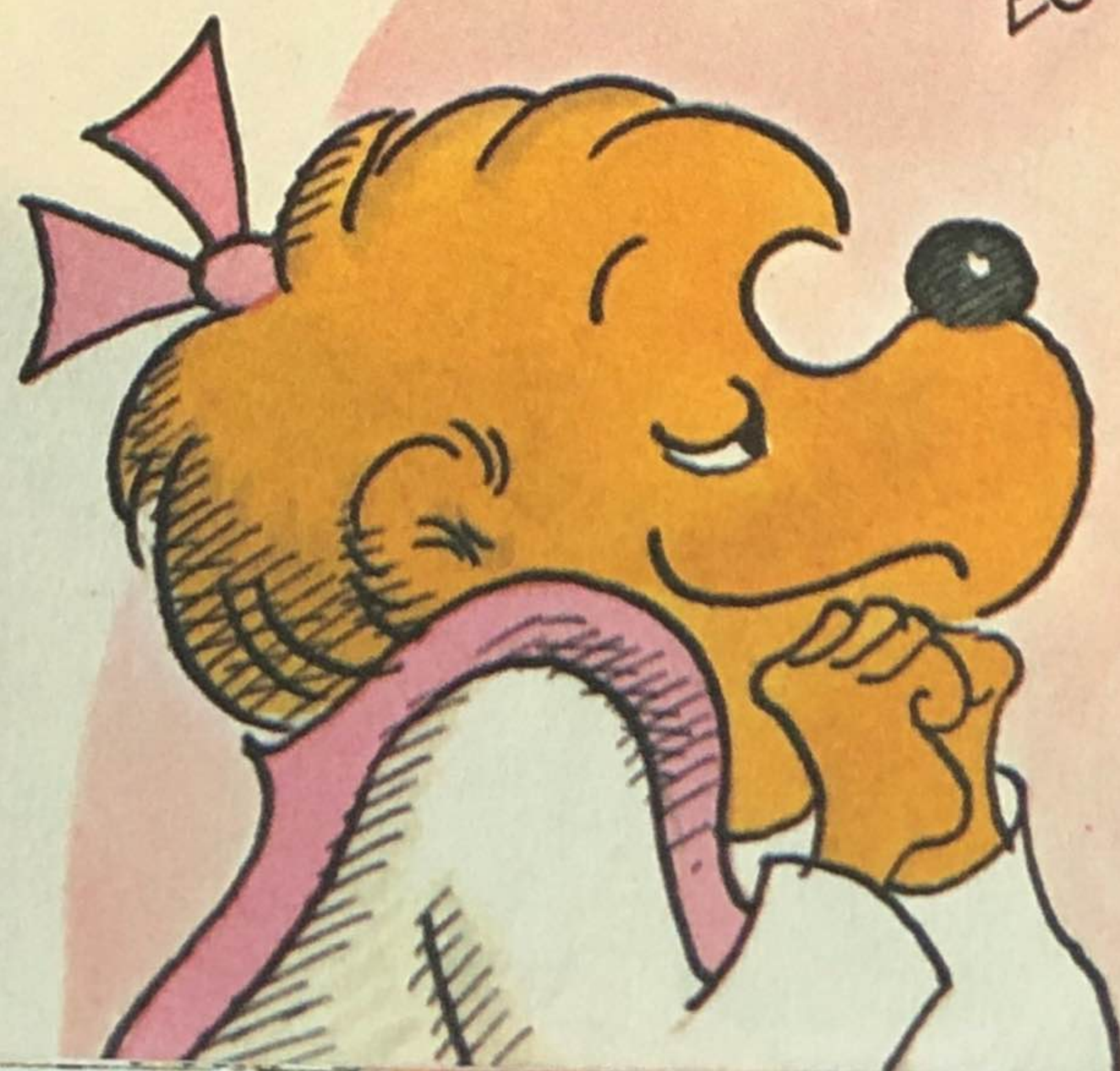


Strings of bright beads  
To hang in festoons . . .



A musical bear  
That sang Christmasy tunes.

TIS THE SEASON  
TO BE FURRY  
ES-PEC-IALLY  
IF YOU'RE A BEAR





But the bears' finest tree thing,  
Their finest by far,  
Was the thing for the top—  
Their Christmas tree star!

It had eighteen points  
And was so glittery bright  
That the stars of the heavens  
Seemed dim in its light.





“What an array!  
What a display!”  
Papa Bear bragged,  
Quite carried away.

“What a grand and glorious  
Sight it will be  
When we hang all this stuff  
On our Christmas tree.

Why, bears will come  
From near and far  
To see how  
Christmasy we are!”







So, all the bears needed now,  
Don't you see,  
All that they needed now—  
*Was the tree!*





"A tree straight and tall,  
Fine, full, and fat.  
Come, cubs!" said Papa,  
As he put on his hat.




"Now be sure to dress warmly,"  
Said wise Mama Bear.  
"There's more than a hint  
Of snow in the air.

And, oh yes,  
Buy our tree down the road  
From Grizzly Gus.  
I am sure he will have  
The right tree for us."







"Snow?" said Papa,  
Sniffing the air.

"Not a chance!

The weather today

Will be bright and fair.

I always can tell

If it's going to snow

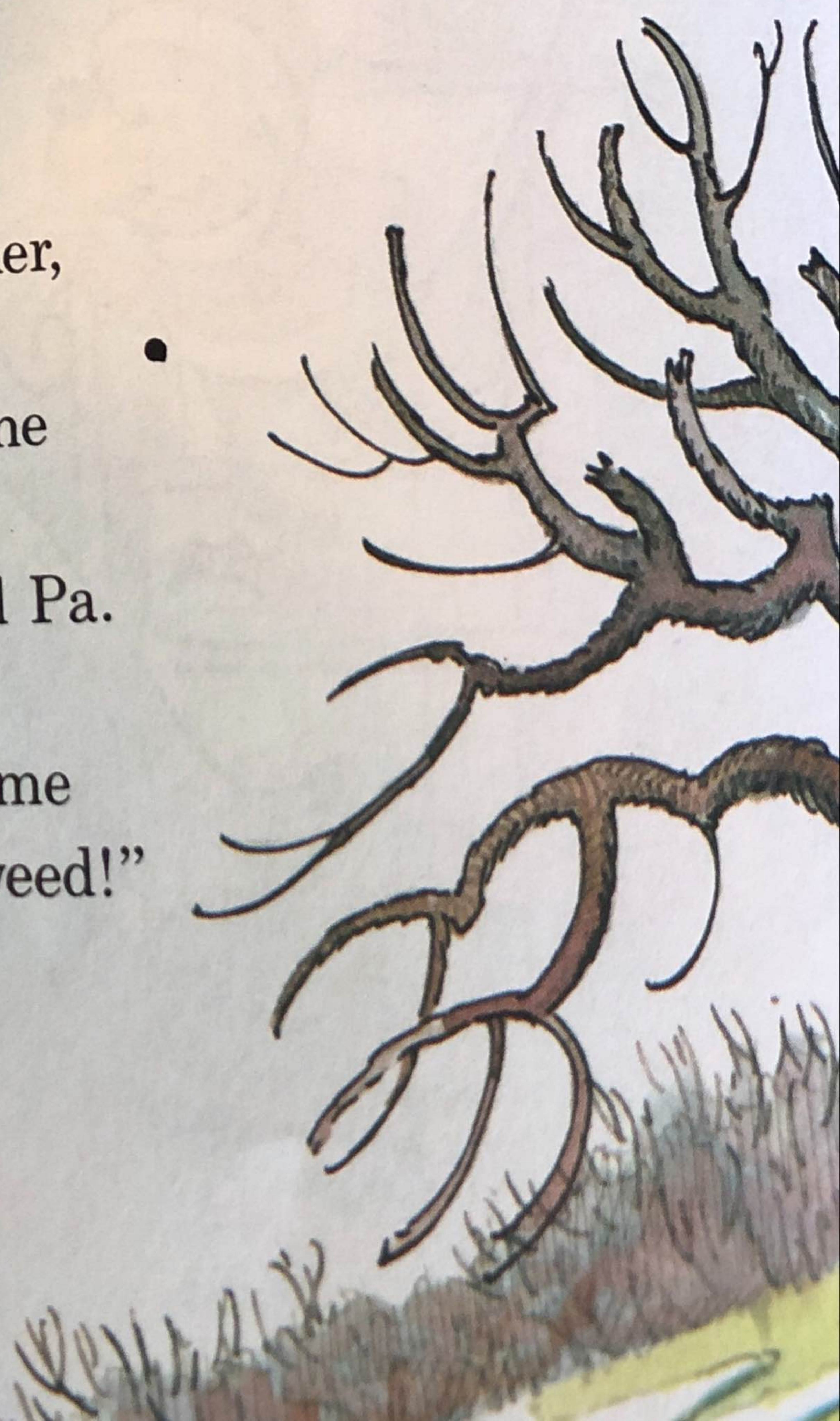
By a sharp shooting pain

In my left big toe!"





“As for Gus and those trees  
Lying in stacks—  
Not for us!” Papa said,  
As he took up his ax.  
“But, Papa,” said Brother,  
“I don’t mean to fuss,  
But Mom said to *buy* one  
From Grizzly Gus!”  
“One of *those*?” snorted Pa.  
“Fresh cut, indeed!  
They look more like some  
Overgrown evergreen weed!”





Now, Brother and Sister  
Usually did what Mom said.  
But not Papa—  
He did whatever  
Came into his head.





And a fine fat tree  
Is what came into his head  
That particular Christmas.

"No matter what! No matter where!  
If it means going down to the Panama Isthmus!  
If it means climbing up to the top of Pikes Peak!  
I will find it," he said, "if it takes us a week!"

"But Christmas," said Sis, "is just hours away!  
We must find our Christmas tree, today!"

But Pop didn't hear.

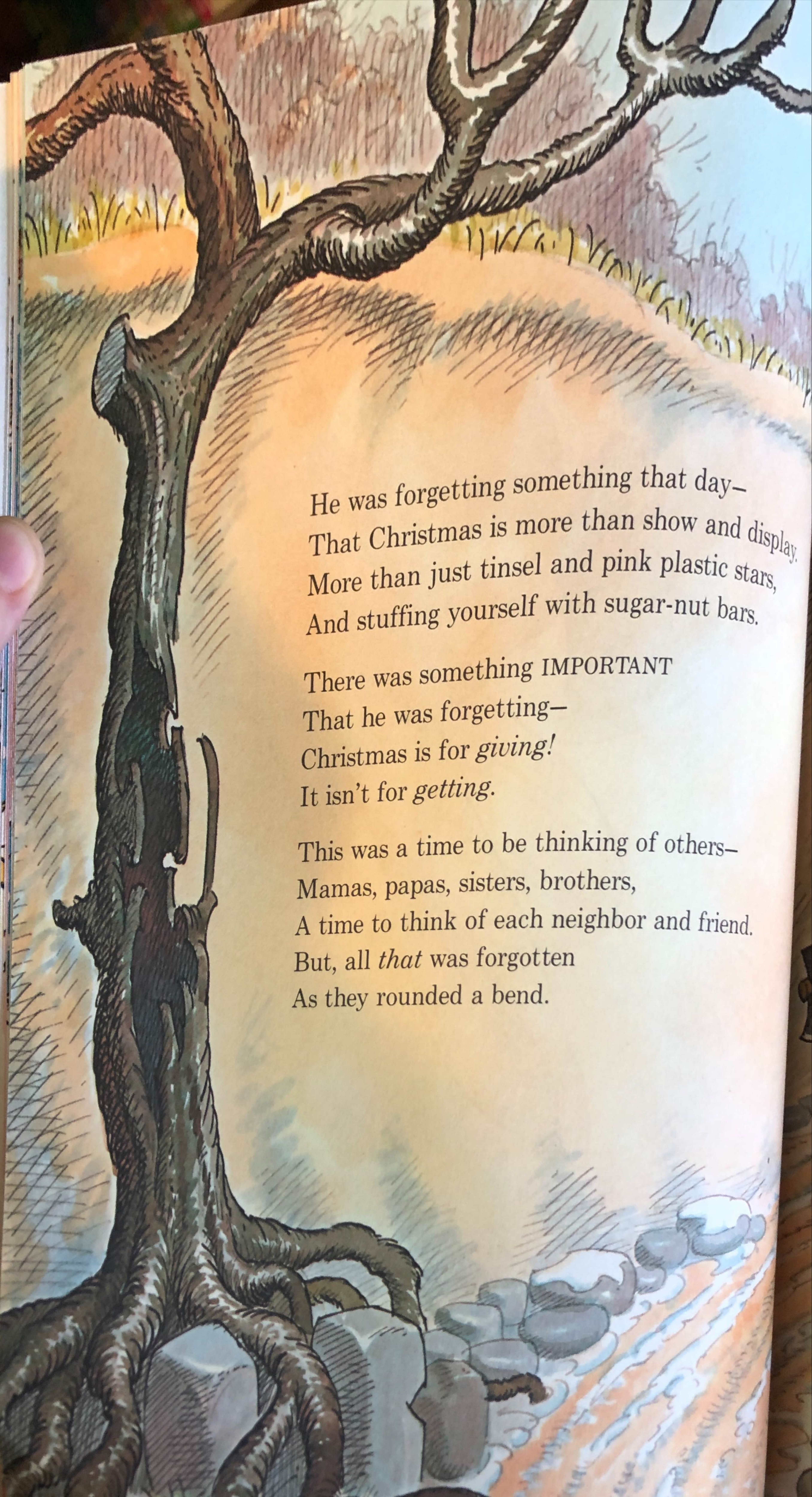
By now, he was really quite carried away.









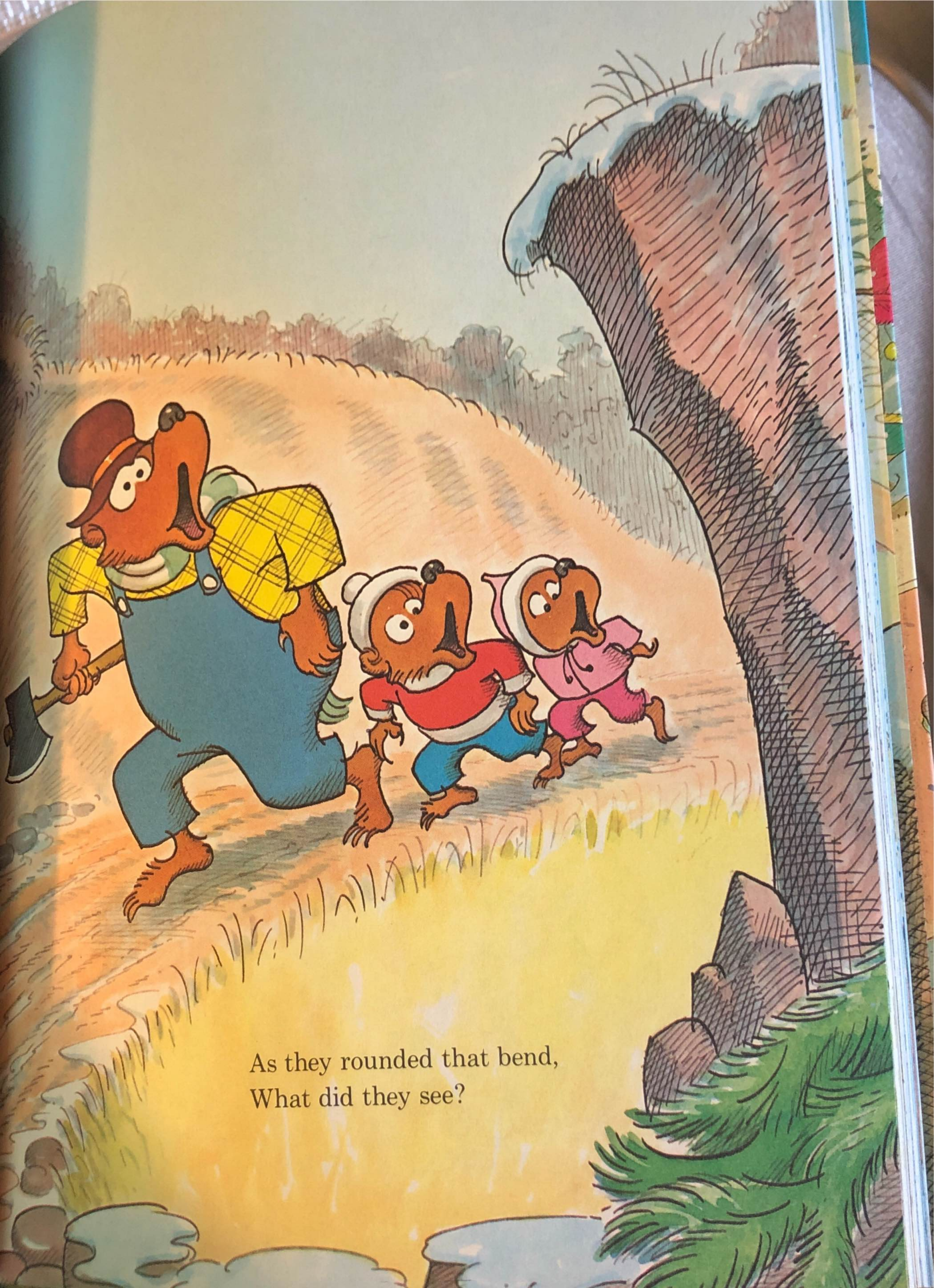


He was forgetting something that day—  
That Christmas is more than show and display.  
More than just tinsel and pink plastic stars,  
And stuffing yourself with sugar-nut bars.

There was something IMPORTANT  
That he was forgetting—  
Christmas is for *giving*!  
It isn't for *getting*.

This was a time to be thinking of others—  
Mamas, papas, sisters, brothers,  
A time to think of each neighbor and friend.  
But, all *that* was forgotten  
As they rounded a bend.





As they rounded that bend,  
What did they see?

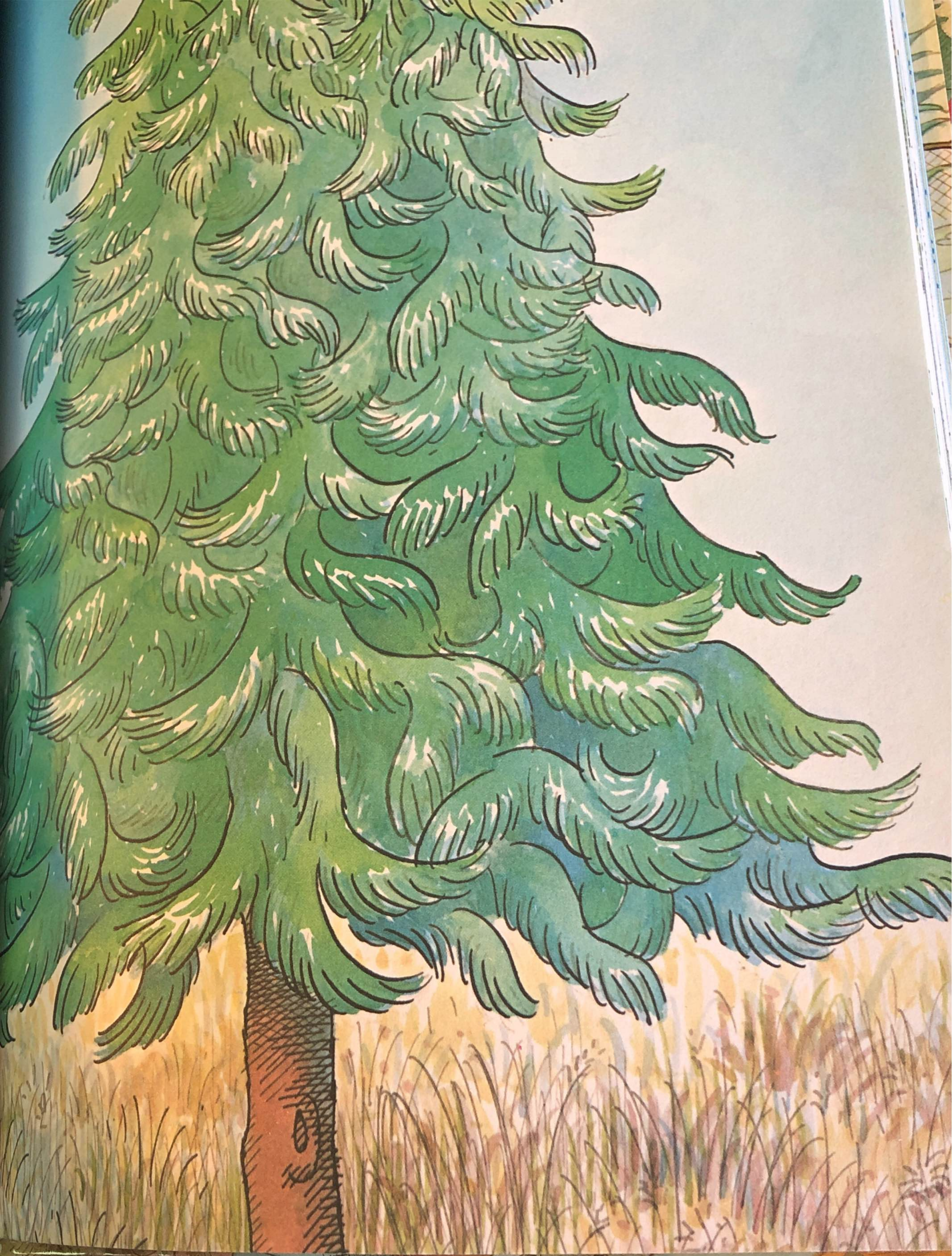


# PAPA'S PERFECT CHRISTMAS TREE!

What a tree! What a tree!  
This surely was it!  
Its green was so green!  
Its tall didn't quit!  
Its nooks all had crannies.  
Its crannies had nooks.  
The one question was—  
Would they have enough hooks?











"Stand back!" said Papa,  
Getting ready to chop.

"Wait!" Sister cried.  
"Hold it, please. STOP!"



On the timely advice  
Of small Sister Bear,  
Pa managed to stop  
His ax in midair!



And a good thing, too—  
For that Christmas tree's trunk

Just happened to be  
The home of a skunk!





And some squirrels and a grouse,  
And one small chipmunk  
Also resided in that  
Christmas tree's trunk.

Plus twenty-six crows,  
Who were renting upstairs.  
And not one of them happy  
To see those three bears!







“Though this tree,” said Pa,  
“Seemed a find,  
It isn’t quite . . .”



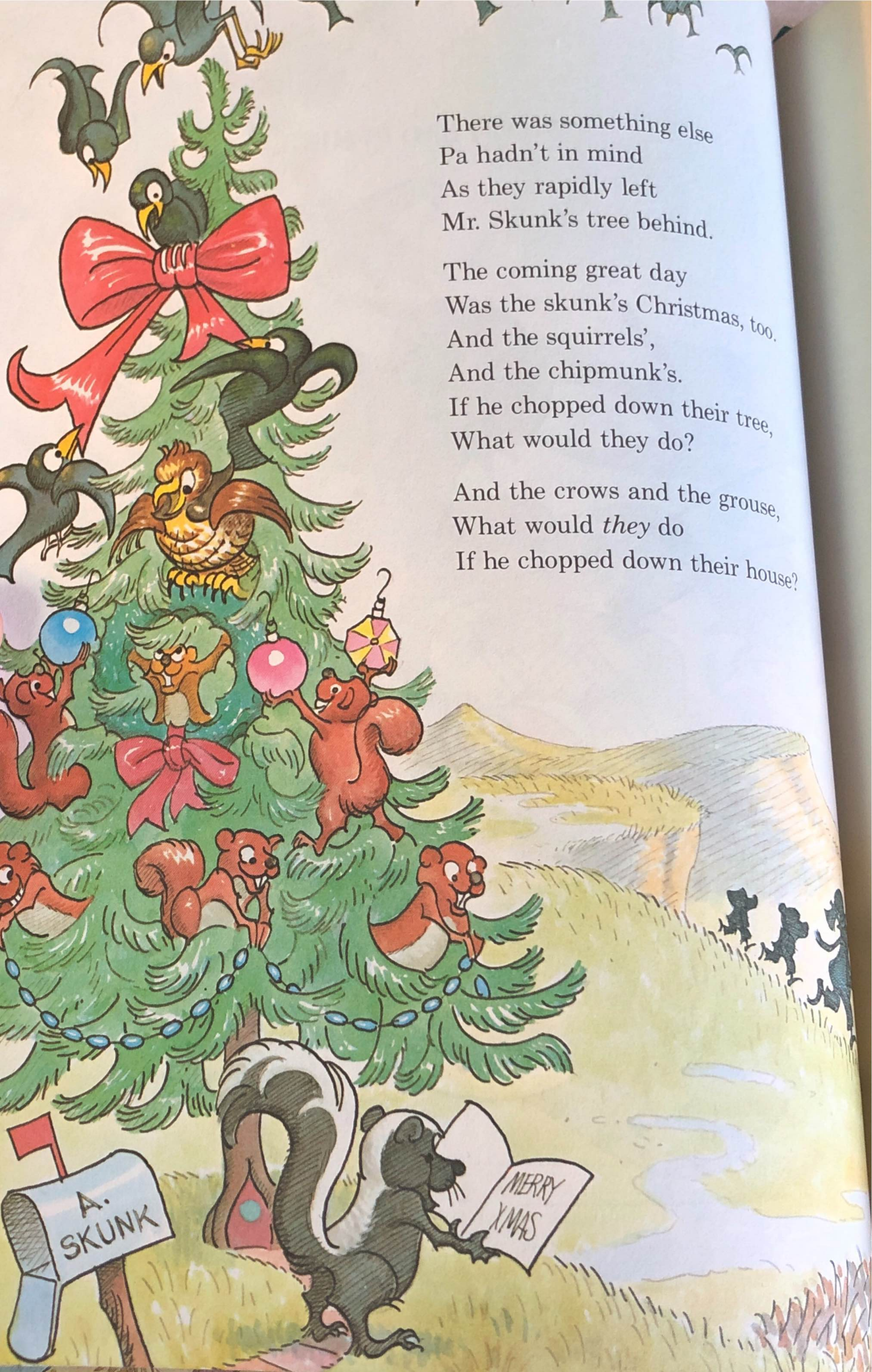




"WHAT I HAD IN MIND!"







There was something else  
Pa hadn't in mind  
As they rapidly left  
Mr. Skunk's tree behind.

The coming great day  
Was the skunk's Christmas, too.  
And the squirrels',  
And the chipmunk's.  
If he chopped down their tree,  
What would they do?

And the crows and the grouse,  
What would *they* do  
If he chopped down their house?



Where would they have *their* holly and bells?  
*Their* Christmas goodies? *Their* Christmasy smells?  
How would they enjoy *their* Christmas feast?  
But such questions as those did not bother Papa,  
Not in the least.

His head was so filled with *his* bangles and bells,  
*His* bright colored balls,  
*His* tree things stacked up in closets and halls,  
That there just wasn't *room* for anything more.

"Onward!" he cried.

And the bears pressed on  
With their Christmas tree chore.





"We will find the right tree.  
We must and we will!"

I will ford any stream!



Climb any hill!



Go over Niagara Falls  
on a log!"





"Penetrate  
The impenetrable fog!"

Brave the terrors  
Of Sinister Bog!



We will find  
The Christmas tree we seek.  
We will find it," said he,  
"If it takes us a week!"

"But, please!" said Sister.  
"We must find a tree soon!"



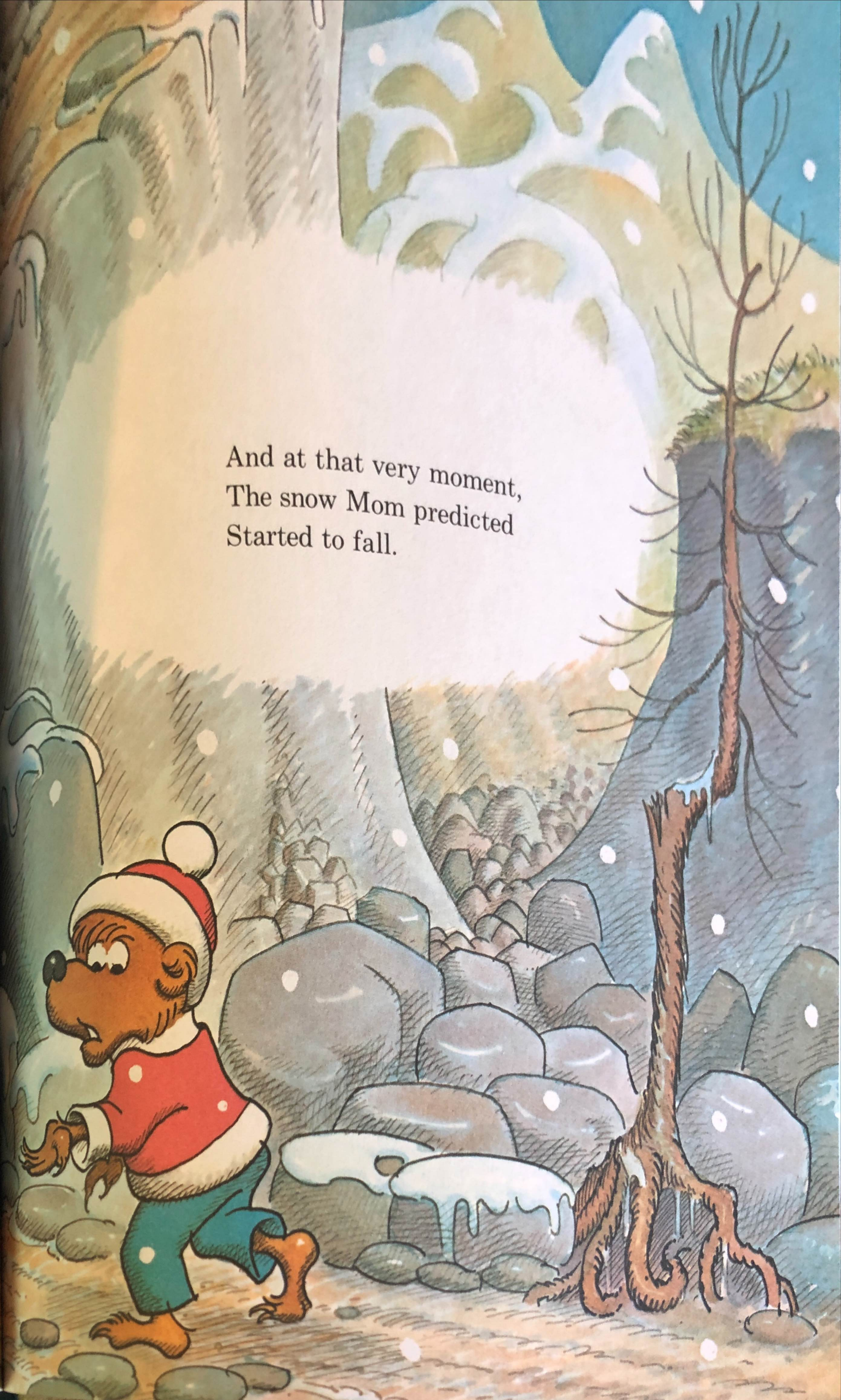
"She's right, Dad," said Brother.  
"It's late afternoon!"



"A tree," cried Papa,  
"Fine, full, and fat,  
Straight, green, and tall . . ."





A cartoon illustration of a brown bear wearing a red and white striped hat with a pom-pom, a red sweater with white trim, and green pants. The bear is looking up with a surprised expression at a large, white, snow-like mass falling from the sky. The background features a snowy mountain range, a bare tree with icicles, and a rocky path. Snowflakes are falling all around.

And at that very moment,  
The snow Mom predicted  
Started to fall.



"Remember," said Dad, "a Christmas tree is something  
We cannot do without.  
Because a tree like that one straight ahead  
IS WHAT CHRISTMAS IS ABOUT!"



Then, without so much  
As a passing thought  
About whether he should  
Or whether he ought,  
He raised his ax  
And got ready to chop.  
"STAND BACK!" he said,  
Reckoning where  
The tree would drop.





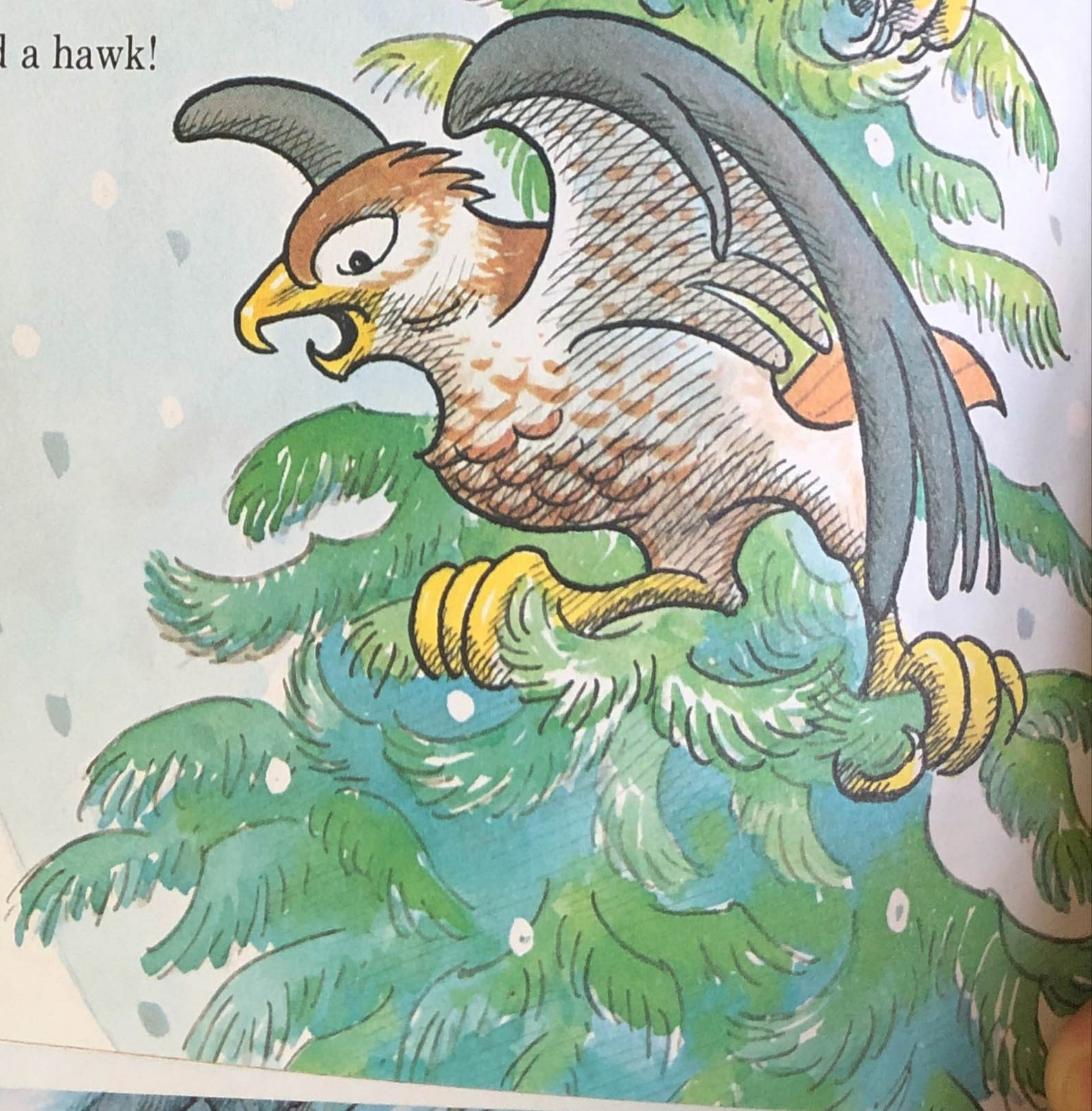
It was quite a fine tree—  
Sedate and tall,  
Graceful and regal.  
It was also, it happened—



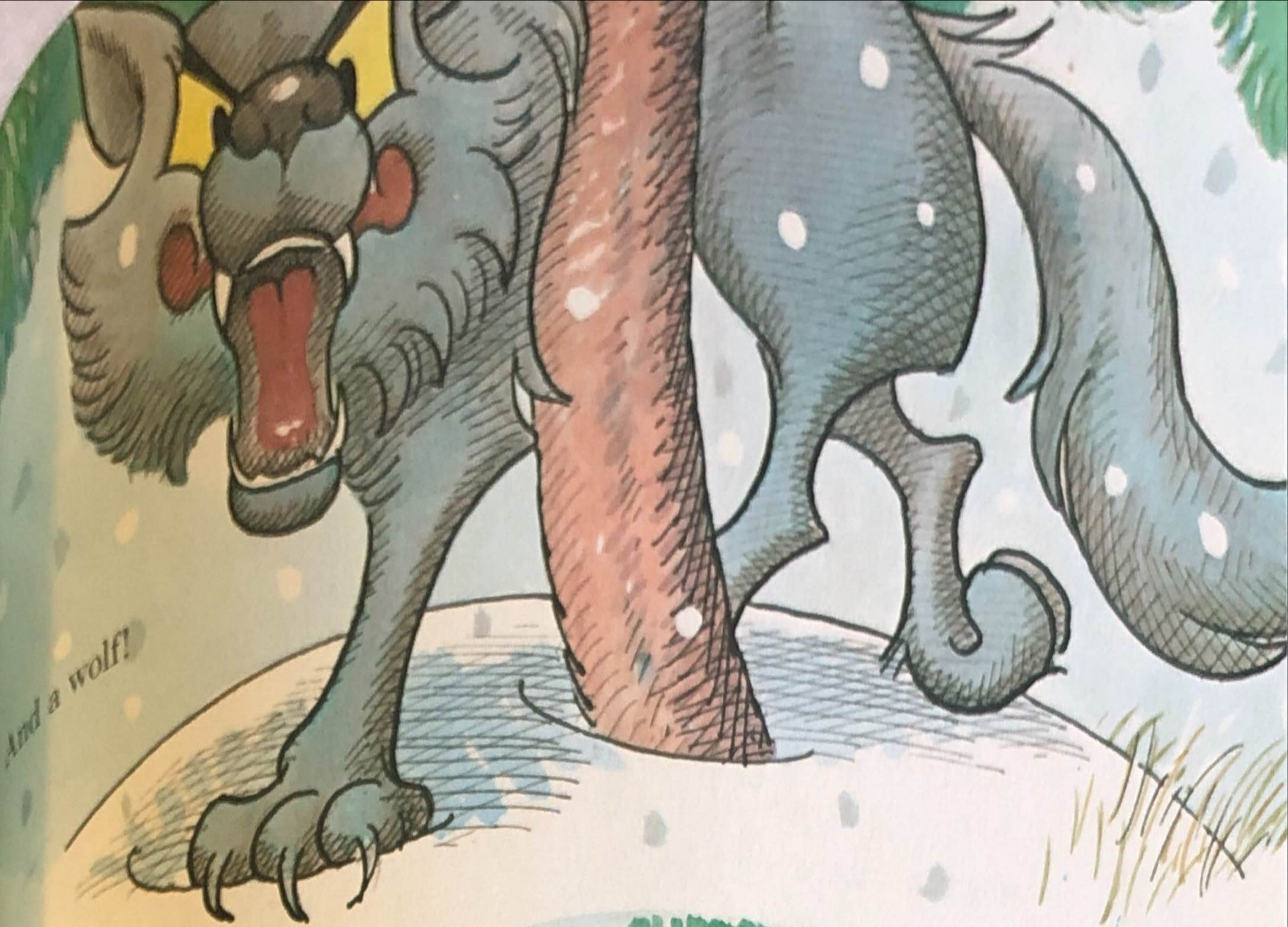
*The home of an eagle!*



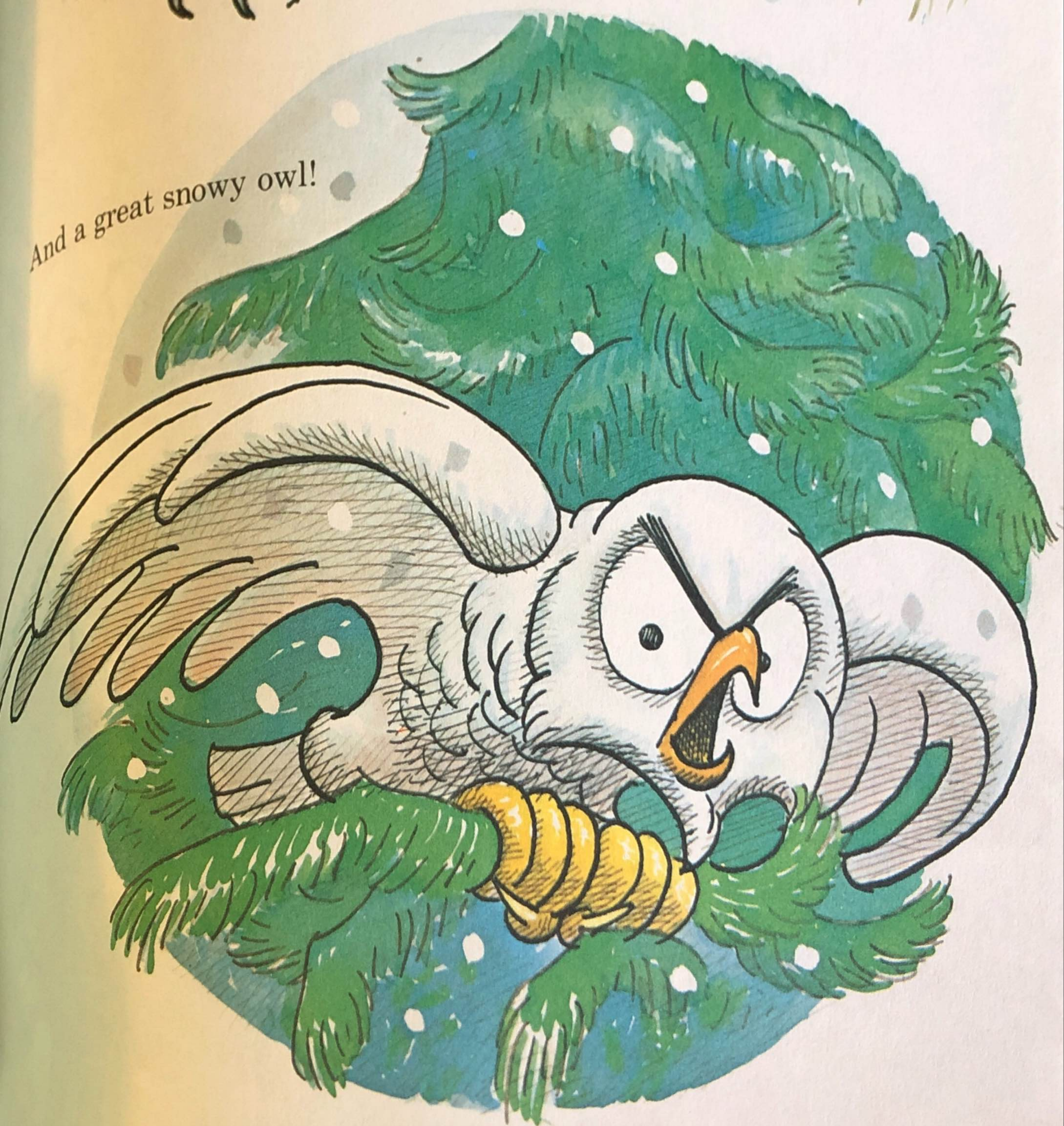
And a hawk!








And a wolf!



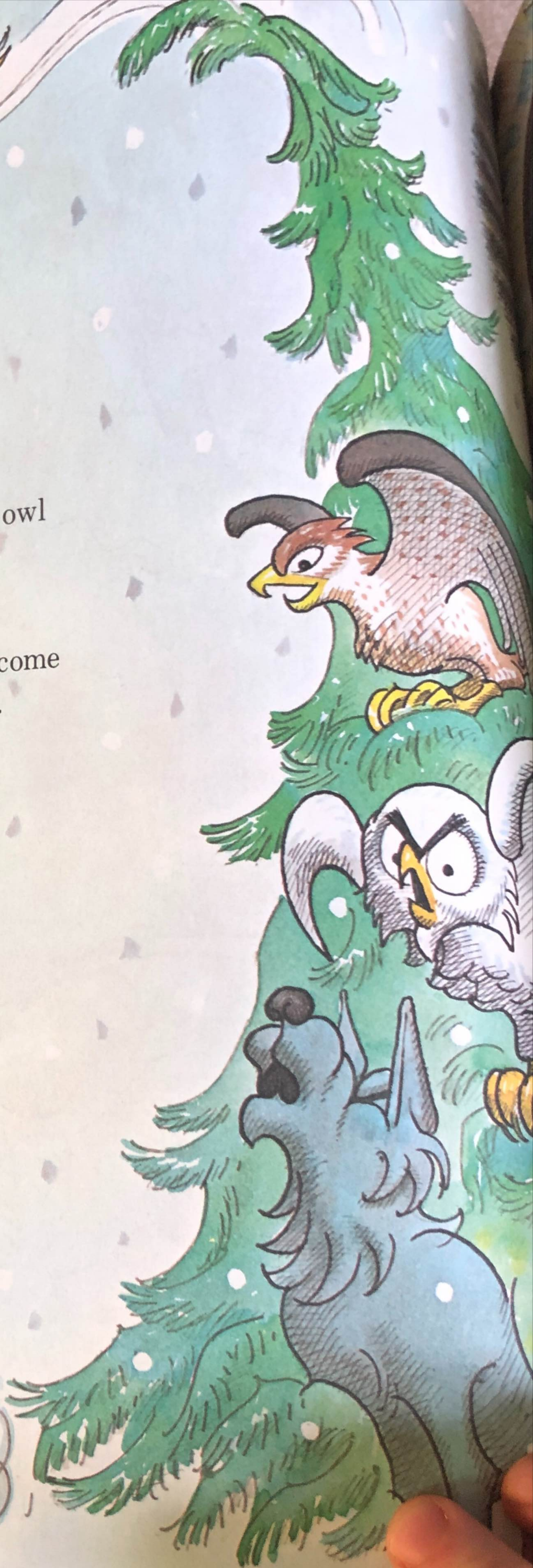
And a great snowy owl!





The eagle took off,  
While the hawk  
And the wolf  
And the great snowy owl  
Set up a terrible,  
terrible howl!

The noise seemed to come  
From every direction.  
Then . . .





Mr. Eagle  
Expressed *his* objection!







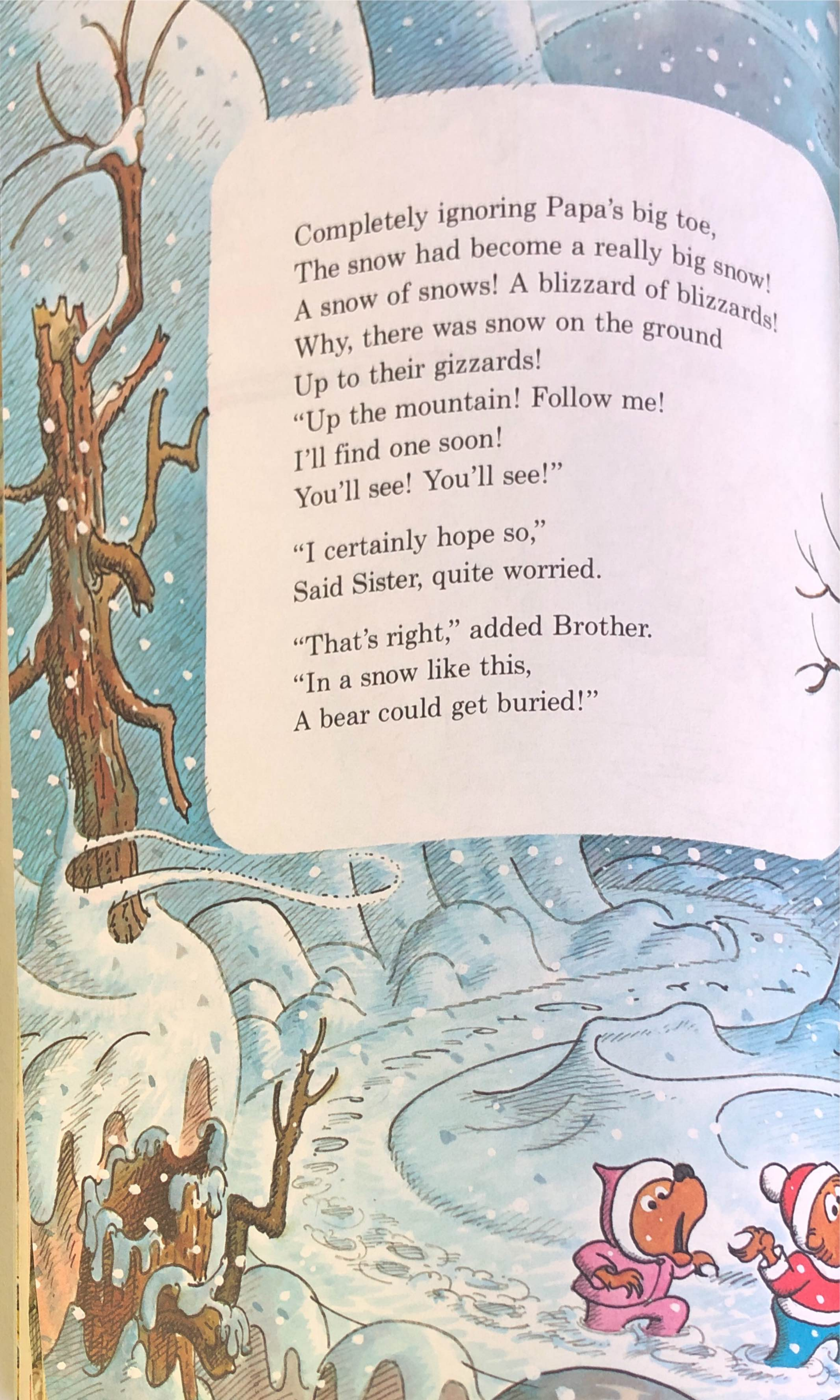




"No, that tree back there  
Wasn't quite it.  
Its green was too green,  
And it leaned a bit.

It wasn't quite  
What I had in mind.  
Come! We still have  
A tree to find!"





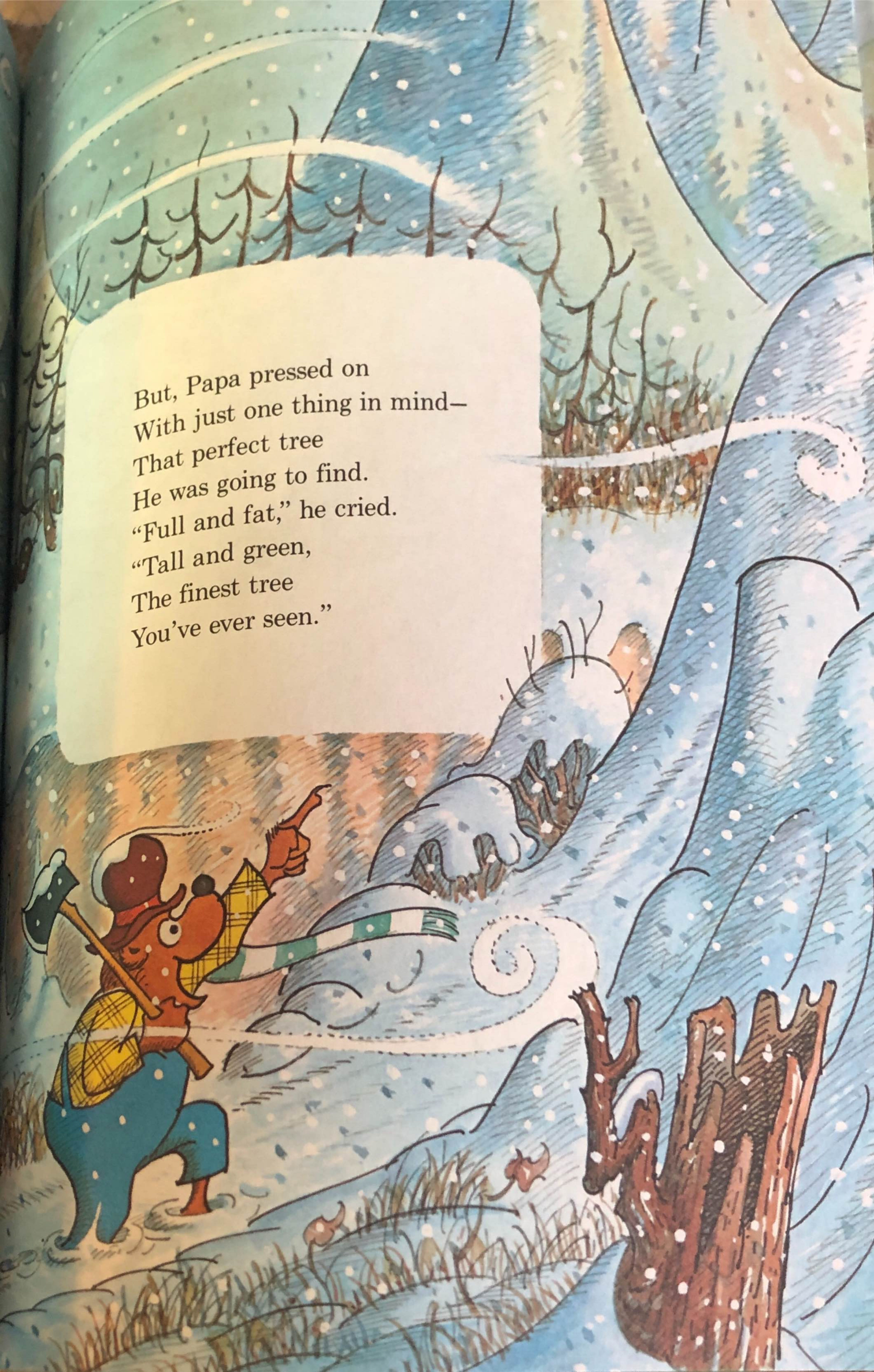
Completely ignoring Papa's big toe,  
The snow had become a really big snow!  
A snow of snows! A blizzard of blizzards!  
Why, there was snow on the ground  
Up to their gizzards!  
"Up the mountain! Follow me!  
I'll find one soon!  
You'll see! You'll see!"

"I certainly hope so,"  
Said Sister, quite worried.

"That's right," added Brother.  
"In a snow like this,  
A bear could get buried!"



But, Papa pressed on  
With just one thing in mind—  
That perfect tree  
He was going to find.  
“Full and fat,” he cried.  
“Tall and green,  
The finest tree  
You’ve ever seen.”





"Now, THAT is the kind  
Of tree I mean!"

"Hurry!" said Sister.

"Chop it down!"

"Yes!" said Brother.

"We still have time

To get back to town!"





But Pop was silent as he looked at that tree.  
Strangely silent. What did he see?

What Papa saw  
Through the driving snow  
Was a *tiny window!*  
Within: a glow.

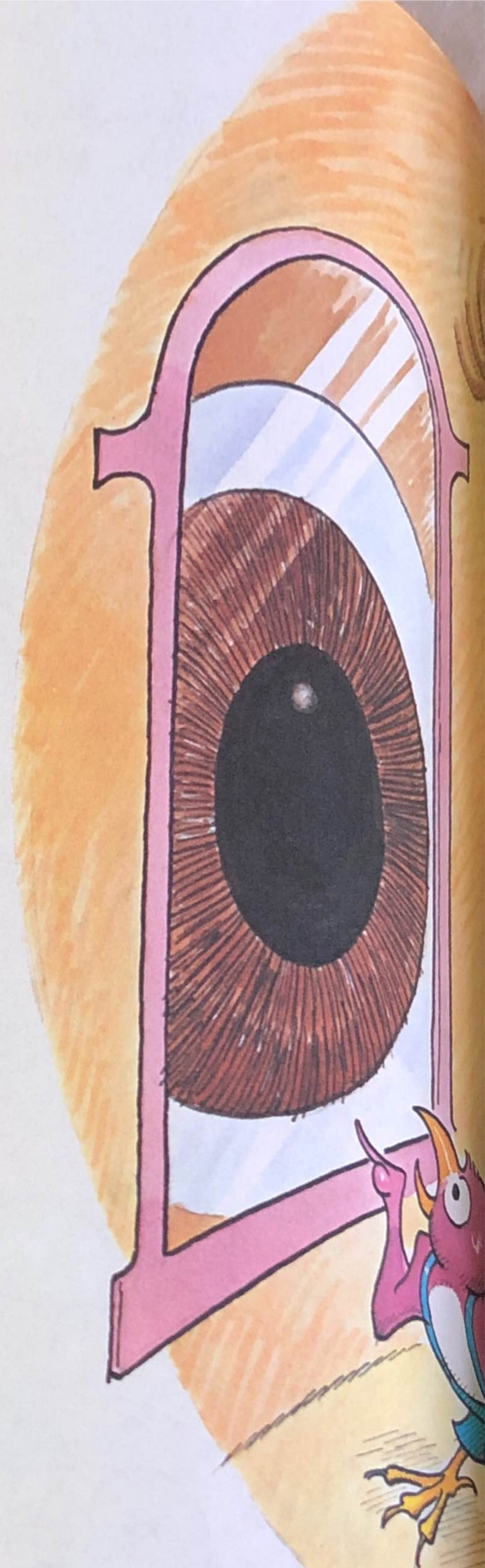




Pop hardly breathed!  
He spoke not a word!  
What he saw through the window  
Was a tiny snowbird  
Busily trimming *his*  
Christmas tree  
With the help of the members  
Of *his* family.

Their tree was a twig  
Decorated with seeds,  
That the tiny snowbirds  
Had collected from weeds.

And for the first time  
That day . . .









Papa saw Christmas  
In a different way.



Maybe it was  
The tiny twig tree,  
Or maybe the seeds  
That helped Papa see  
The other guy's needs.



But whatever it was, Pa shouldered his ax  
And spared the tree.  
He remembered what Christmas is really about.  
He'd had it all backward and inside out.





"This," said Pop,  
With a far-off Christmasy  
Look in his eye,  
"Is a time to think  
Of the other guy.  
A time," he continued,  
"To be thinking of others—  
Mamas, papas,  
Sisters, brothers.  
Nature's creatures,  
Great and small,  
Fellow creatures,  
One and all."







“But, Papa!” said Sis.  
“What about *our* tree?  
The tree for our bells?  
Our bright colored balls?”

“Yeah!” added Brother.  
“And all that stuff  
In our closets and halls?”

“No problem,” said Pa.  
“There’s no need to fuss.  
We’ll go back and buy one  
From Grizzly Gus.”





"GRIZZLY GUS?"  
Both cubs said together.  
"After that trip?  
And that climb?  
And this weather?"

"Don't bother me  
With questions," said Pop.  
Then he found an old stump  
And started to chop.  
And quick as a flash  
There were three pairs of skis.  
"Here," Papa said,  
"Slip into these."





So, Pop and the cubs  
Put on skis  
And went back for one  
Of Old Grizzly's trees.





But when they got back  
To the Christmas tree lot,  
The lot was still there,

**GRIZZLY GUS**  
FRESH CUT  
CHRISTMAS TREES

**SORRY  
SOLD OUT**





*But the trees were not!*

Only a sign  
Saying, SORRY, SOLD OUT,  
And some tired old needles  
Lying about.





When Sis saw those needles—  
Well, she thought she might cry.  
But then something *wondrous*  
Caught her eye!

“LOOK!” she shouted—









"Somebody has decorated our HOUSE!"





And somebody had—  
The chipmunk, the skunk,  
The crows, and the grouse,  
The eagle, the owl,  
And all of the others,  
And quite a few  
Of their sisters and brothers,  
Were returning the kindness  
Pa showed those snowbirds.

The bears, they were speechless.  
They just had no words.

All of the bears'  
Tree things were there—  
The bangles, the bells,  
The musical bear,  
The Christmas tree star,  
The Santa Bear sled. . . .

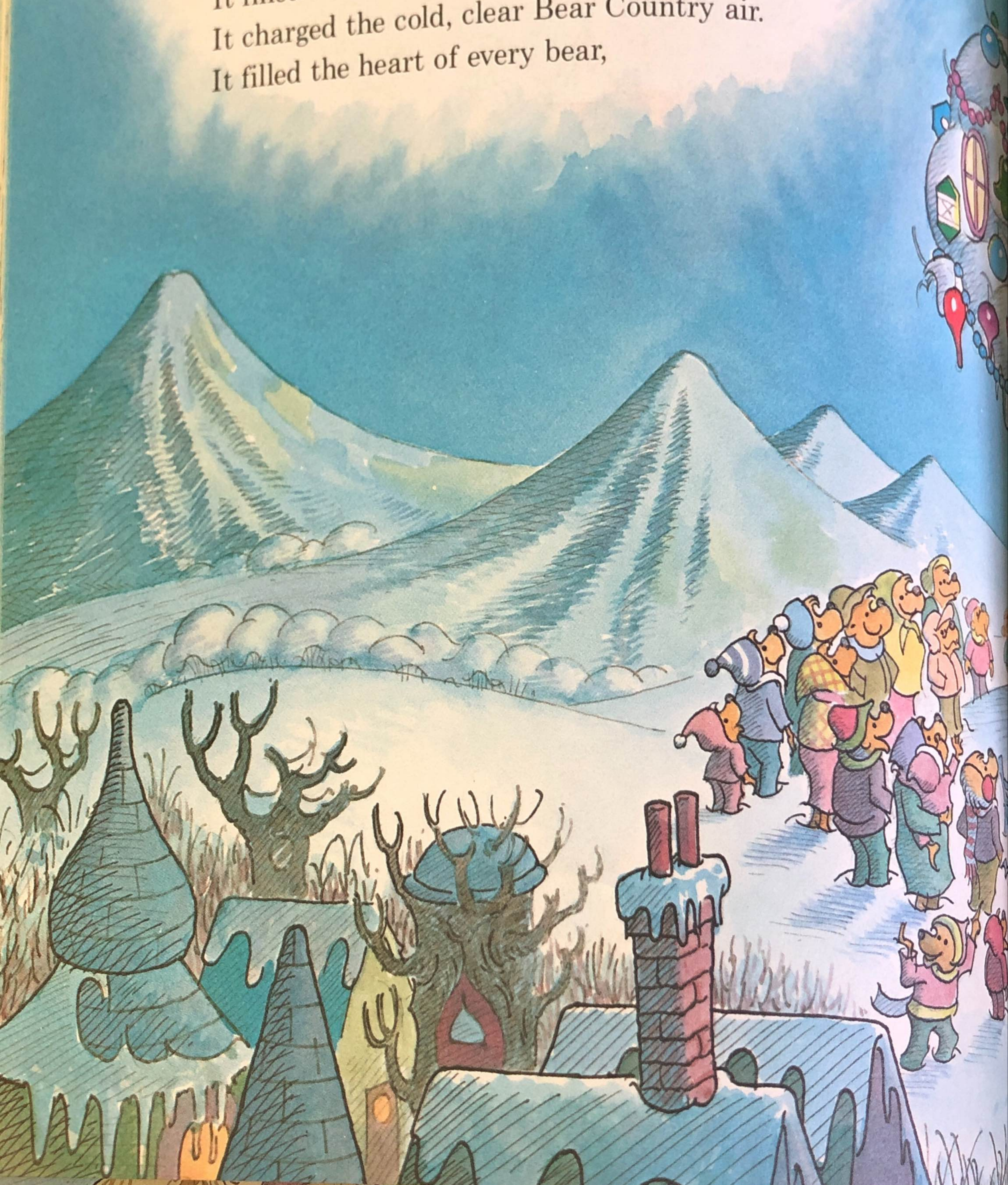




"Why, everything's shining!"  
Sister suddenly said.

Then a very special starry light  
Filled the sky that Christmas Eve night.  
It didn't come from that pink plastic star.  
It was the light of the *real* Christmas Star!

The true Christmas spirit shone down that night.  
It filled the whole sky with a lovely light.  
It charged the cold, clear Bear Country air.  
It filled the heart of every bear,





And their fellow creatures,  
One and all,  
Nature's creatures,  
Great and small.





Next day, at dinner, Brother Bear wondered,  
“Pop, on that thinking-of-others bit—  
How about the salmon?  
How about *it*?”



“Your remark,” said Papa,  
“Shows wit and perception.  
But in the case of the salmon,  
We’ll make an exception!”





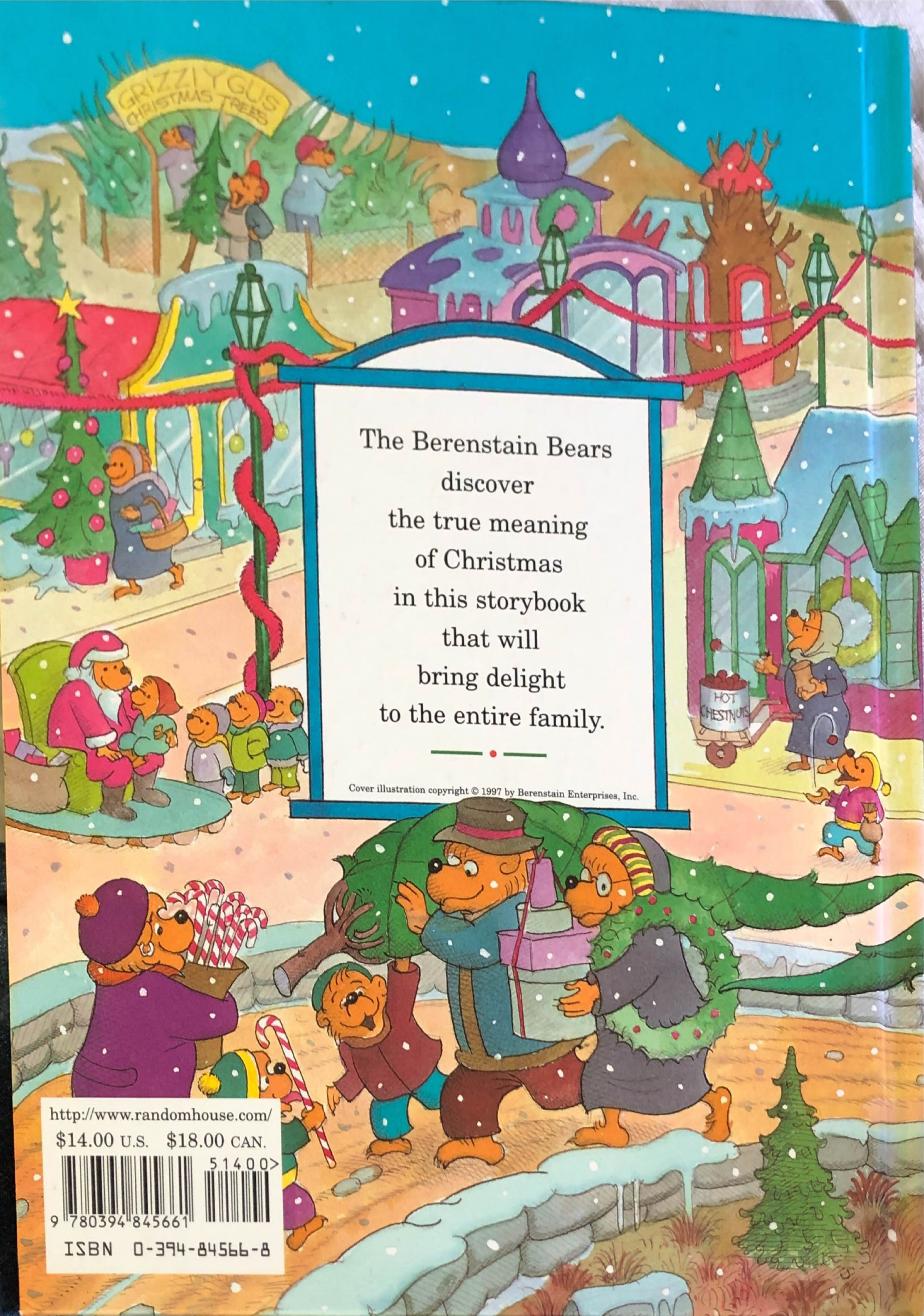












The Berenstain Bears  
discover  
the true meaning  
of Christmas  
in this storybook  
that will  
bring delight  
to the entire family.

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